

Self-awareness can be defined as the ability to recognise and name your own emotions, leading to understanding the impact these emotions can have on your behaviour. Self-awareness also involves being able to assess your own strengths and challenges and holding a strong sense of confidence and self-esteem.

These activities aim to enable young people to explore their own qualities, interests, talents and individuality. Through the recognition of, and appreciation for, the positives in life, young people will be better able to cope with difficulties or challenges. Through raising a young person's awareness of their strengths and talents, it can bring balance to their view of life, especially if the young person experiences some negativity in their home, school or social life. It is important for young people to feel enabled to take control of their own life plans and goals, and identify areas of improvement within their lives. The use of positive self-talk and affirmations can increase a young person's ability to respond positively to their emotions and situations they face throughout their lives.

Learning outcomes

Young people will...

- Learn to create a better sense of who they are
- Learn how to value themselves
- Develop a strong positive perception of themselves
- Build self-esteem, confidence, and overall wellbeing
- Build personal resilience.

Activity 1

'YOUnique'



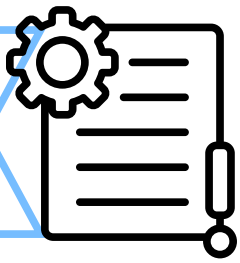
Purpose: Young people are given an opportunity to reflect upon what is unique and special about them.

Objectives: Young people will identify what is special about them.



Resources: Worksheets, pens, high-lighters.

Display:
Ground Rules
Privacy & Confidentiality



Steps:

1. Explain that everyone is unique and has their own personal attributes, gifts and potential. Each person is one of a kind.
2. Identifying and expressing these gifts can improve mental health and emotional wellbeing, as well as helping young people deal with life's challenges.
3. Give each young person a worksheet and a variety of pens and highlighters. Encourage young people to be creative.
4. Give participants 5 minutes to complete the worksheet – ask them to think about their own qualities, talents and achievements.
5. If appropriate, divide young people into pairs to discuss what they wrote.

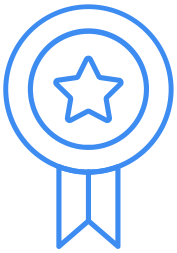
Processing Questions:

- How did you find thinking about what is unique about you?
- Do you have any opportunities to express your unique gifts?
- How can being involved in local youth groups help you express yourself?
- Is it important to think about your own individuality?

Self Awareness

Take a moment to think about your own unique qualities, talents, and achievements. These can be personal qualities, skills, hobbies, or any accomplishments you're proud of.

Name 3 things toy like about yourself:



_____

_____

_____

What are two talents you have or things you enjoy doing?

_____

_____

_____

Can you think of something you did that made you feel really proud or happy? It could be something big like winning a sports game or something small like helping a friend.

Achievement 1: _____

Achievement 2: _____

Think about how the things you're good at or the things you've done make you feel. They can make you feel proud and happy. They can also give you reasons to keep trying your best and do even more cool stuff.



Think about these questions:

- How do the things that make you special make your friendships stronger or make people like being around you?
- How do you feel when you use your talents or skills? Does it make you happy or proud?
- Have the things you've done in the past made you want to do more cool stuff? Have they made you feel good about yourself?

Activity 2

'Quantities of Qualities'

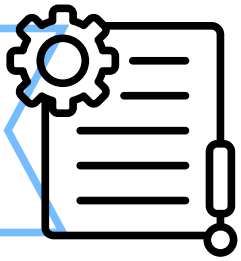
Purpose: To enable young people to explore their own positive characteristics and strengths.

Objectives: Young people will be able to identify positive characteristics about themselves and their peers.



Resources: Coloured pages and pens

Notes:
Some young people may need to be supported to complete this activity.



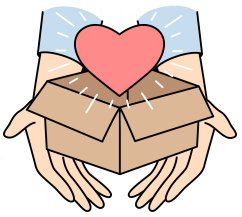
Steps:

1. Ask young people to sit in a circle and give each participant paper and pens.
2. Ask each young person to put their name at the top of the page and to design their page with drawings.
3. Ask each young person to write three things that describe them on the page.
4. When finished, ask each young person to pass their paper to the person on their right. Each member of the groups adds another positive quality and passes it on to the next person.
5. Please ensure to be clear **ONLY** positive comments are written.
6. Keep passing the sheet until the paper comes back to it's owner.
7. Allow young people to read through the comments written on their picture. Encourage young people to keep their sheet.

Processing Questions:

- How do you feel writing positive things about yourself?
- Did you find it difficult to think of positive qualities for yourself?
- Did you find it difficult to think of positive qualities for others?
- How do you feel about the positive things others wrote about you?
- Is it important to know and appreciate your own qualities? Why?

Activity 3



'Your Hope Box'

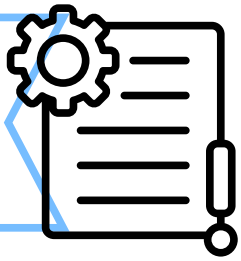
Purpose: To encourage participants to reflect on things in their life that can give them hope for a brighter future.

Objectives: Young people will identify keep-sakes and symbols which bring them hope or comfort.



Resources: Shoe box per participant, coloured paper, magazines, pens, markers, glue, scissors, computer, printer.

Notes:
Give the option to bring their hope box in at a later stage in the programme, to share the contents with the group.



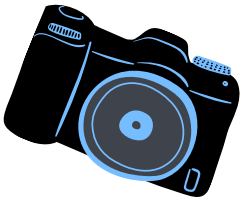
Steps:

1. Introduce the idea of the hope box by asking participants to think about a couple of things that they find gives them a positive feeling and/or a sense of hope or comfort. *Examples may include: items from a favourite hobby – team colours, music sheets or arts and crafts pieces, favourite bar of chocolate, old birthday cards or any other keepsake.*
2. Allow time for young people to discuss things they may add to their box.
3. Set out the shoe boxes, paper, magazines, pens, markers, glue and scissors. Allow young people to google images if they wish.
4. Ask each of the young people to decorate a shoe box, using materials provided. When each box is created advise young people that they can take their box home - they can add more items that give them hope over the course of the programme.
5. Ask for some volunteers to share some of the things they would like to include in their own hope box.

Processing Questions:

- How do you feel about making a hope box?
- Why do you think it is important to think about things that give you hope?
- Do you think your hope box will make you feel more positive about things in your life?

Activity 4



'Me In Pictures'

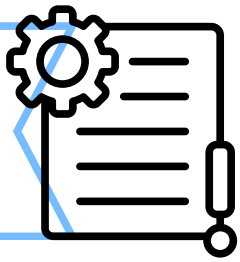
Purpose: To help young people reflect on who they are and share in an artistic way.

Objective: Young people will learn how to understand and express their identity through a collage activity. This will help to develop self-esteem and self-concept.



Resources: Card, pictures, magazines, glue stick, coloured pens, laptop and printer if possible.

Notes:
Talk through this session prior to the day it is being carried out, allow young people to forward plan and prepare.



Steps:

1. Explain to the group that this is an activity to express who they are and their interests.
2. Split the group into smaller groups and allow them to chat about what they would add to their own collage.
3. Allow young people to gather pictures and words that describe them.
4. Encourage young people to be as creative and inclusive of their own taste as possible.

Processing Questions:

- How did you find doing this activity?
- Did you find it hard or easy to pick pictures that represent you?
- Did you learn anything about yourself doing this activity?
- What did you learn about others in the group?
- How did you find sharing something about yourself like this?
- Do you think it is important to take time to reflect on who you are?
- Does this impact on your wellbeing?
- What else can you do to find out more about yourself and who you are?
- Did you learn anything from this activity?



Activity 5

‘Overcomer’

Purpose: To facilitate a discussion and reflection session with young people after watching the movie "Overcomer" to explore themes of identity, resilience, and personal growth.

Objective: Young people will watch a short film and discuss the relevance to them and self-reflect on their own identity.

Resources: Overcomer Animated Short video - youtube

Notes:
This can be done with any video you can find online relevant to your you people’s awareness of self

Steps:

1. Arrange for a viewing of the video "Overcomer" with your group.
2. After watching the video, gather the young people for a group discussion.
3. Encourage them to share their thoughts, feelings, and impressions about the film. Ask open-ended questions like:
4. What did you think about the main character's journey and struggles in the movie?

- Were there any moments in the film that resonated with you personally?
- What do you think the movie was trying to convey about identity and resilience?

5. Guide the discussion towards the key themes of the movie, such as finding one's identity, resilience, and personal growth.
6. Encourage participants to share their interpretations of these themes and the lessons they took away from the short film.

Activity 6



‘Barriers to Body Positivity’

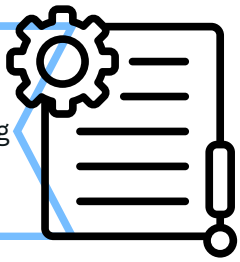
Purpose: To identify and raise awareness of the barriers that can hinder self-love and positive body image in young people.

Objective: Young people will be able to recognise these barriers, understand their impact, and explore strategies to overcome them, fostering self-acceptance and positive body image.



Resources: Flipchart paper or whiteboard, markers, sticky notes or small pieces of paper, tape.

Notes:
Create a safe and non-judgmental space for open discussion, where young people feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and experiences



Steps:

1. Begin by explaining the purpose of the activity: to explore the barriers that can hinder self-love and positive body image.
2. Ask the participants to brainstorm and write down on sticky notes or pieces of paper the barriers they perceive that hinder self-love and a positive body image.
3. Encourage them to think about societal, personal, or emotional barriers.
4. Create a barrier wall on a flip-chart paper or whiteboard and stick the participants' written barriers on it.
5. Discuss each barrier one by one, allowing the participants to share their thoughts, experiences, and feelings related to these barriers.
6. Emphasise the importance of acknowledging and understanding these barriers.
7. After discussing each barrier, encourage the participants to analyse why these barriers exist and how they affect self-love and body image.
8. Discuss how societal standards, media, and personal experiences can contribute to these barriers.
9. Collaboratively brainstorm strategies and solutions for breaking down these barriers.
10. Encourage participants to share personal or collective ideas on how to overcome these challenges.
11. Highlight the significance of self-acceptance and self-compassion

Activity 7



‘Emotion Charades’

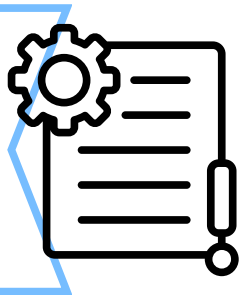
Purpose: To help young people become more aware of various emotions, improve their emotional intelligence, and enhance their ability to express and recognise emotions.

Objective: Young people will act out various emotions using only body language for the group to analyse and guess the emotion.



Resources: A list of emotions, a hat or container to hold the emotion prompts, space for acting.

Notes:
This activity explores various emotions and helps to become more attuned to non-verbal cues and expressions. It's a fun and engaging way to improve emotional intelligence and communication skills.



Steps:

1. Write down a list of different emotions on separate pieces of paper or index cards. Ensure that the emotions are age-appropriate for the group.
2. Ask each participant to choose an emotion card randomly from the hat or container. They should keep the emotion a secret.
3. In a designated order or randomly, one participant at a time will act out the emotion on their card without using any words or sound.
4. The rest of the group watches and tries to guess the emotion being portrayed.
5. The person acting has a time limit (e.g., 1-2 minutes) to express the emotion.
6. After each performance, allow the group to make guesses regarding the emotion.
7. Discuss with the actor how they conveyed the emotion and what cues or body language helped the group guess correctly.
8. Encourage the group to share their thoughts on the significance of recognising and understanding different emotions.
9. Continue taking turns until everyone has had the opportunity to act out their assigned emotion.
10. Emphasise that there are no winners or losers; the activity is about learning and improving emotional awareness.



‘Emotion Charades’

Joy	Sadness	Anger
fear	Surprise	Disgust
Trust	Anticipation	Love
Guilt	Excitement	Confusion
Pride	Envy	Shame
Anxiety	Gratitude	Compassion
Hope	Regret	Sympathy

Activity 8



'Would I Rather?'

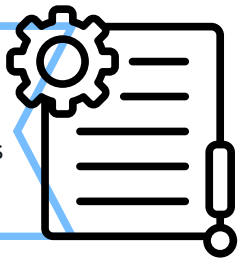
Purpose: To encourage young people to explore their values, prioritise what makes them happy, and engage in discussions about personal values and preferences.

Objective: Young people will reflect on their values, make choices that align with what makes them happy, and engage in open discussions about personal preferences through would you rather questions



Resources: Printed or written "Would You Rather" questions, space for group discussions

Notes:
This is an engaging way to encourage them to think about what truly matters to them



Steps:

1. Explain the purpose of the activity: to explore personal values and what makes individuals happy.
2. Mention that there are no right or wrong answers, as it's a chance to reflect on individual preferences.
3. Present the first "Would You Rather" question to the group.
4. Ask each participant to take turns sharing their choice and briefly explain why they made that choice.
5. Encourage participants to consider their values, priorities, and what brings them happiness.
6. After each question, open the floor for group discussion. Prompt participants with questions like:

- Why did you choose the option you did?
- Do you think your choice aligns with your values and what makes you happy?
- How do personal values influence our choices and overall well-being?



‘Would I Rather?’

- Have a job that pays a lot but you don't like it, or have a job that pays less but you love doing it?
- Travel back in time to meet your ancestors, or travel to the future to meet your descendants?
- Be invisible so nobody can see you, or be able to teleport to any place instantly?
- Have a long life with a regular job, or a short life but doing your dream job?
- Always say what's on your mind even if it hurts others, or keep your thoughts to yourself but feel unhappy?
- Fly like a bird in the sky, or breathe underwater like a fish?
- Be really good at one thing, or be pretty good at a lot of things?
- Spend a day exploring a new city, or a whole week relaxing on a sunny beach?
- Have the power to time travel for one day, or the power to read people's minds for one day?
- Live in a world where the sun never sets, or where it's always dark?
- Be famous for being really smart, or famous for being really kind?
- Have a few really close friends, or lots of people you know a little bit?
- Be able to heal other people's injuries and sickness, or instantly heal yourself when you're hurt?
- Always tell the truth even if it makes someone sad, or tell a little lie to make them feel better?
- Live in a cozy little house in the woods, or a big fancy apartment in the city?
- Have all the food you love to eat forever, or all your favorite books to read forever?
- Understand every language in the world, or talk to animals like you talk to your friends?
- Remember every single thing that happens to you but sometimes feel really emotional, or control your feelings perfectly but forget a lot of stuff?

Activity 9



‘Life Map’

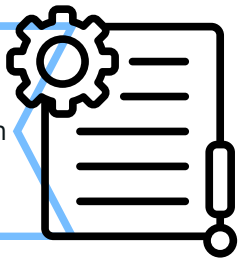
Purpose: To visually represent and reflect on significant and challenging life events, fostering self-awareness and providing insight into how these experiences have shaped them

Objective: Young people will reflect on and visually map out the significant and challenging events in their lives, fostering self-awareness and a better understanding of their life journey.



Resources: Large sheets of paper for each participant, markers printed pictures or magazines for visual representation, glue or tape, scissors.

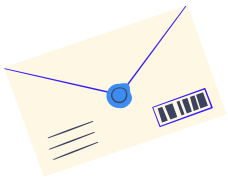
Notes:
This can be done without the images whereby they map out highs an lows on a time line with significant life events identified



Steps:

1. Explain the purpose of the activity: to create a visual life map that represents significant and challenging events in their lives.
2. Distribute the sheets of paper, markers, printed pictures, and other materials to the participants.
3. Encourage participants to take a moment to reflect on their lives and identify significant and challenging events.
4. They can include events like birth date, starting school, starting a youth club, meeting a friend, losing a pet, or other important milestones.
5. Instruct participants to create their life map by drawing a timeline across the sheet of paper.
6. Place pictures or images from magazines that represent the significant events along the timeline.
7. Encourage creativity and personal expression.
8. Ask participants to caption or write a brief description next to each picture, explaining the event's significance or the challenges they faced.
9. Participants can use their journals or notepads to jot down these descriptions.
10. Invite each participant to share their life map with the group, explaining the events and their personal journey.

Activity 10



‘Letter To a Stranger’

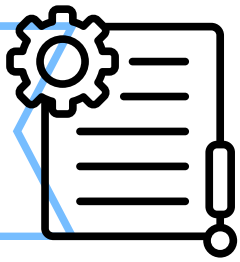
Purpose: To be creative while fostering self-awareness and allowing participants to gain insights into their self-identity

Objective: Young people will encourage participants to reflect on their self-identity and engage in self-expression by writing a letter to a stranger



Resources: Blank sheets of paper, pens or pencils

Notes:
This can also be a letter to their younger/older self



Steps:

1. Explain the purpose of the activity: to write a letter introducing and describing oneself to someone who doesn't know them.
2. Ask participants to imagine they are writing a letter to a stranger who is interested in getting to know them.
3. In the letter, they should introduce themselves, share their name, age, and any other basic information they feel comfortable disclosing.
4. Encourage them to describe their personality, interests, hobbies, and anything they are passionate about.
5. Suggest including their dreams, goals, or aspirations, as well as any challenges they've overcome.
6. Emphasise that this is a creative exercise, and participants should feel free to express themselves authentically.
7. After writing the letters, ask participants to reflect on the following questions:

- What did you learn about yourself while writing this letter?
- Did anything surprise you or stand out as important to your self-identity?

8. Invite participants to share their letters with the group (or in pairs, depending on group size)

Activity 11



‘Colour Check In’

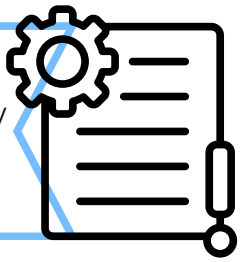
Purpose: To allow young people to reflect on their current state of wellbeing and emotions

Objective: Young people will express their current emotions or feelings using colours.



Resources: Overcomer Animated Short video

Notes:
Young people can get as artistic as they like, drawing things they currently like/dislike

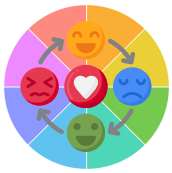


Steps:

1. Explain the purpose of the activity: to check in with participants' emotions through the use of colours without the need for verbal communication.
2. Provide each participant with a blank sheet of paper or a colour card.
3. Instruct participants to choose a colour that best represents their current emotional state. They should pick the colour that resonates with them at that moment.
4. Encourage participants to fill the entire sheet with their chosen colour, covering it completely. They can use markers or coloured pencils.
5. Explain that they should focus on the process and be present in the moment while colouring.
6. After everyone has completed their colour expression, gather the group for a discussion.
7. Ask participants to share their chosen colours and why they selected them, without going into the specific details of their emotions.
8. Discuss the power of non-verbal expression and the impact of colour on emotions.
9. Allow participants to reflect on the following questions individually:

- How did it feel to express your emotions through colour?
- Did you notice any shifts in your emotional state during the activity?
- What did you learn about yourself or your group through this non-verbal check-in?

Activity 12



'Emotions Wheel'

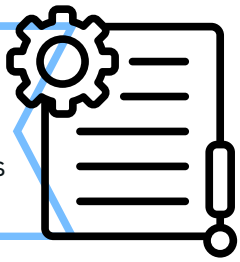
Purpose: To self reflect on certain moments in their lives and use art to express the emotions

Objective: Young people will explore and express their emotions by drawing a time when they felt a specific emotion on an emotions wheel.



Resources: Emotions wheel template, blank sheets of paper, coloured markers or pencils

Notes:
This can also be done on flip-chart paper to create more room for pictures



Steps:

1. Provide each participant with a blank emotions wheel template.
2. Instruct participants to select an emotion from the emotions wheel and recall a specific moment in their lives when they felt that emotion strongly.
3. Encourage them to draw a visual representation of that moment within the corresponding section of the wheel. This can be a simple illustration or a symbol that represents the emotion.
4. After completing their emotions wheels, invite participants to share one or more of their drawn moments with the group.
5. Encourage them to explain the situation briefly and why it made them feel that way.

Processing Questions

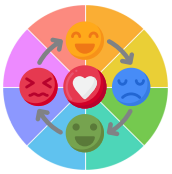
Which emotions were easiest for you to identify on the wheel?

How comfortable are you expressing or acknowledging these emotions?

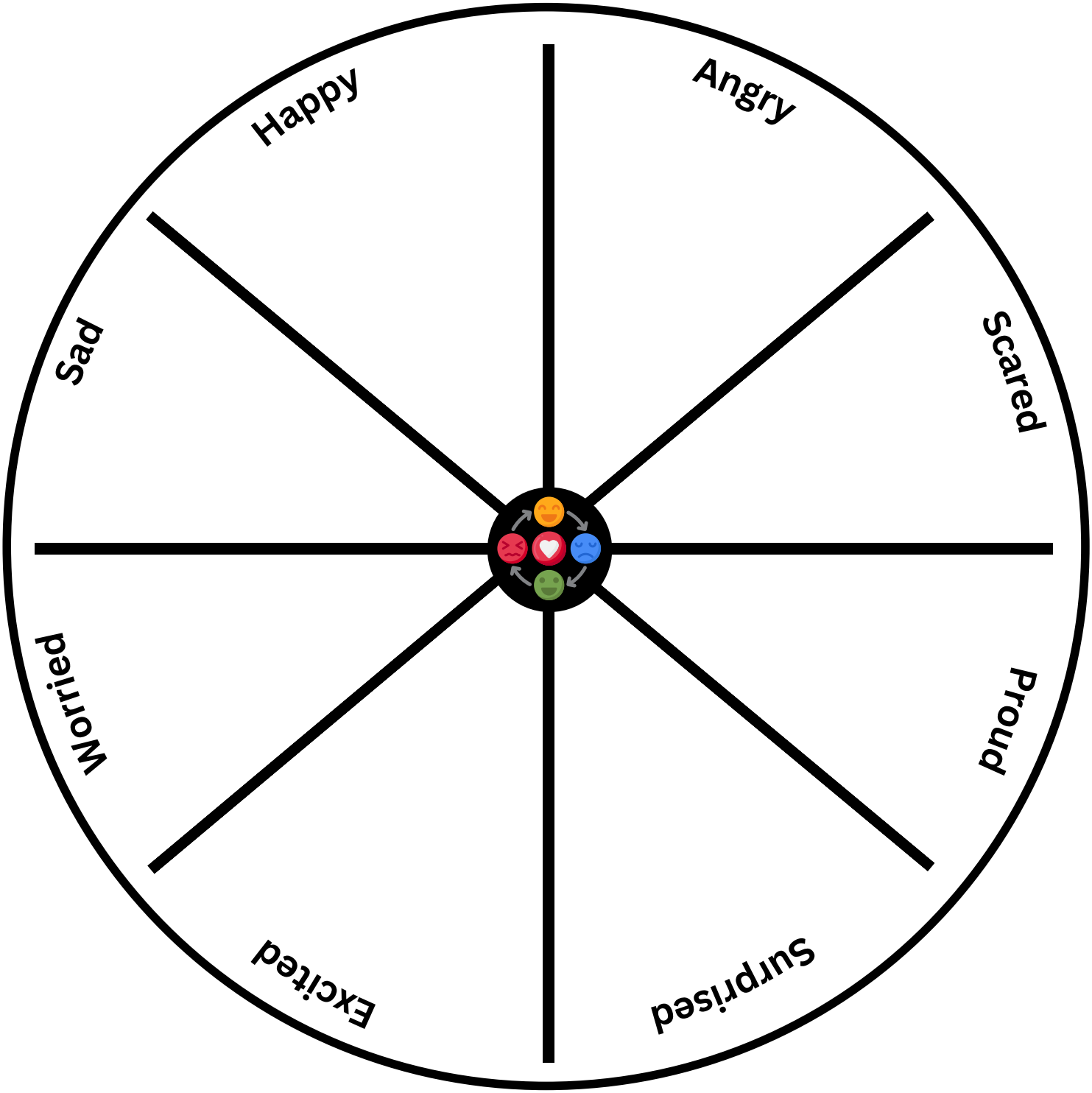
Did you notice any patterns in the emotions you tend to feel more intensely?

Can you recall specific experiences linked to certain emotions on the wheel?

What small steps can you take to better manage or express your emotions in daily life?



‘Emotions Wheel’



Activity 13



‘Name that Emotion’

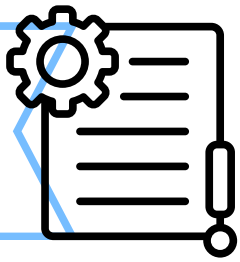
Purpose: To foster emotional awareness and encourages conversations about emotions

Objective: Young people will identify and recognise a range of emotions by connecting them with similar or related feelings on an emotions wheel



Resources: Emotions wheel template, a list of emotions or feelings, coloured markers or pencils.

Notes:
This can be adapted to the emotions most relevant to unpack with your group



Steps:

1. Explain the purpose of the activity: to enhance emotional awareness by connecting and recognising similar or related emotions on an emotions wheel.
2. Provide each participant with a copy of the emotions wheel template.
3. Explain that this wheel represents a variety of emotions or feelings.
4. Give participants a list of emotions or feelings (either printed or written on separate cards).
5. Instruct them to match each emotion on the list with the one on the wheel that they believe is most similar or related.
6. Have participants work individually to match the emotions from the list to those on the emotions wheel.
7. They should use coloured markers or pencils to draw lines connecting each emotion on the list to the corresponding emotion on the wheel.
8. After the matching is complete, gather the group for a discussion.
9. Ask participants to share some of their matches and why they connected those emotions.
10. Encourage a conversation about the nuances and differences between similar emotions.



‘Name that Emotion’

